

How To Succeed . . .

cont. from page 3

but it may be useful for those approaching legal blindness to have at least a rough idea of what it means. There are two different sets of conditions, usually known as *visual acuity* and *visual field*. A person is legally blind if his or her acuity is insufficient for reading ordinary newsprint even with glasses. The measurement of visual field is more complicated, but you can easily test your own visual field to see whether or not it is normal. Hold your hands about six inches from your ears and, while staring straight ahead, wiggle your fingers. The normal visual field is slightly more than 180 degrees, so that, if your field is normal, you should be able to see both sets of fingers wiggling while you are staring straight ahead. If you cannot do this, then try the following: Hold one arm straight ahead, fully extended, with your thumb and forefinger as far apart as you can

make them. The angle formed by the tip of your thumb, your eye (do this with one eye at a time), and the tip of your forefinger is about 15 degrees. If you cannot see both tips at the same time, then you are probably well below the visual field that is legal blindness.

Unlike a decline in acuity, which is usually obvious, declines in visual field are insidious and may go undetected for many years. If you think that your visual field may be impaired, hike yourself to an ophthalmologist or optometrist for a precise measurement. And don't put it off; some of the causes of blindness are easily treated, others are not, but you ought to know the score right away.

Proof Of Legal Blindness

Assuming that you are legally blind, get a statement in writing to this effect from your ophthalmologist or optometrist. Make several copies of this letter, and put the original in a safe place, preferably a bank vault.

What do you do with these documents? First, attach one of them to your next income-tax return, and be sure to claim the additional exemption that legal blindness confers on you. That

alone should more than pay for the cost of the visit to the ophthalmologist or optometrist. If your condition is irreversible, (if there is no way in which medicine, surgery, or glasses can restore your sight to normal) have your specialist say that it is irreversible and this one certification will satisfy the IRS for the rest of your life; you will not need to include it in subsequent returns. You will need a second copy in order to get rehabilitation training through your state's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (or whatever the functional equivalent of this is called in your state). You will need a third copy in order to get books from *Recording for the Blind*, the main source of recorded textbooks and technical books, and still another copy to get reproducers and books from the talking book program of the Library of Congress, which is available in each state through regional libraries and in Toledo area thru the Toledo Society for the Blind.

(This article, which next focuses on rehabilitation, will be continued in the Fall Newsletter.)

sometimes proves to be a difficult task. When she is able to break away from her job in the tax department at Questor Corporation, he, for one reason or another cannot leave his job, and vice versa. When they finally do get together, "we don't enjoy just staying home on vacation, but rather prefer to travel—going to Florida or upper Michigan."

Mr. and Mrs. Norwood have two children—Carol, who is a registered nurse, and Stephen, who hopes to receive a bachelors degree in elemen-



tary education in June. Mr. Norwood also is a member of the Lions Club of Downtown Toledo and has been affiliated with the Harbor Light Masonic Order for 30 years.

The Toledo Society for the Blind welcomes newsletter readers to visit the Society and meet Mr. Norwood. He will gladly provide you with a tour of our facilities. After all, that's another part of his job!

Focusing on our Staff Meet Donald Norwood

The Toledo Society for the Blind is particularly proud of its staff and views each member as a contributing asset. From time to time, we would like to focus briefly on one staff member so that his or her contributions might be more clearly defined for those of our readers who are not familiar with many of the staff members at the Society.

In this issue, we would like to introduce Donald Norwood who has been with the Society since January, 1963. He initially was employed as a bookkeeper and assumed his present position as the Society's executive director in January, 1972. Mr. Norwood's duties include directing activities, coordinating various programs connected with the Society, and assisting 17 staff members toward a more productive operation, which is often facilitated by holding staff meetings with each department as necessary. He also oversees the Sheltered Workshop at the Society headquarters in which 60 people are employed.

How does he spend his spare time? "Though I'm not much of a bowler, I enjoy it," Mr. Norwood said, adding that he also reads a great deal. Coordinating vacations with his wife, Gloria,



Mr. John Goerlich
Member of Board of Trustees—30 years
President of Board of Trustees—20 years
Toledo Society for the Blind

The Toledo Society For The Blind

Published semi-annually by the Toledo Society For The Blind, a Community Chest Agency

Editor: Lyle O. Kirk
Editor: Pat Bilow
Photographer: Earl Bilow
President: John Goerlich
Executive Vice President: William A. Marti
Treasurer: Franklin Schroeder
Secretary: Walter H. Cline
Executive Director: Donald G. Norwood
Trustees: Walter H. Cline, Law & Insurance; Thomas R. Day, Vice-President/Willis Day Storage Co.; J. Martin Ecker, Retired—CPA; John Goerlich, Director/Questor Corporation; Robert D. Kiess, M.D., Ophthalmologist; Lyle O. Kirk, Consultant; William A. Marti, President/Canteen Service Co. of Toledo; Mrs. John G. Meszaros, Retired; Louis Paine, Retired—Insurance; Frank G. Pletz, Senior Vice-President/Toledo Trust Company; Franklin Schroeder, Retired—Stockbroker; Charles E. Trauger, President—United Savings & Loan Association; and Richard Vining, Blind Representative.

the Toledo Society for the Blind

1819 Canton Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43624, Telephone 241-1183



A Community Chest Agency

Vol. 10 No. 1—April 1977

A Train Trip To Elkhart

Over 70 people, composed mainly of blind people and their sighted guides, participated in the Amtrak train ride to Elkhart, Indiana, in September to tour the Elkhart Rehabilitation Center for the Handicapped. This was the first train ride for many in the group.

Sponsored by the Progressive Club, the trip was coordinated by Mrs. Rosalyn Snow, the Society's rehabilita-

tion instructor.

"Initially, we made plans for 15 to 20 people, but then it snowballed, and we needed not one but two Amtrak coaches and larger dining facilities than the Center could offer," Mrs. Snow related. "But the Center was able to work this out beautifully with a nearby hotel, and for only \$3 each we enjoyed a delicious turkey dinner with all



Virginia Place, Susan Gaetner, Billy Chapman, and Lyle Kirk take time for a picture in front of an Amtrak car.



Mrs. Rosalyn Snow coordinated the train trip.

the trimmings."

The train left Union Station at 9 a.m. and returned to Toledo by 8:15 p.m. Transportation to and from the station was provided by the Lions Club.

This was the first outing of this kind ever planned by the Progressive Club, a social club organized in 1924 for blind people. Plans for another trip, possibly to Elyria, Ohio, by train or bus, will soon get under way, according

cont. on page 2

Early Reminder for 1977 Holiday Greeting Card Program

We would like to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone of you for your gracious response to our 1976 Christmas Card Program. Once again, this program was most successful, for which we are extremely appreciative and grateful.

Because of your generous response, we are able to continue with our extra-curricular activities—some of which are the summer camp, family nights

and the eye clinic at St. Vincent Hospital.

Even though it is only spring, the 1977 Christmas season will be upon us once again before we know it. To those of you who wish to have your holiday greeting cards ready for early mailing, we will send three attractive Christmas card samples. To receive them, just fill out the enclosed postpaid order form and drop it in the mail.

If you wish, your cards may be

imprinted with your name, but please allow \$4.50 extra per card selection for this service.

Should you choose to order some of these lovely cards, you will be neither charged nor billed for them. Instead, we ask that you make a contribution to the Toledo Society for the Blind. Anything over the amount you normally spend for holiday greeting cards is tax deductible.

Elkhart Train Trip

cont. from page 1

to Mr. Ray Meyers, president of the club. Details will be announced at a later date.

Special thank yous are extended to the Amtrak employees who provided extra courtesies for the blind, Mrs. Mary Workman of the Elkhart Rehabilitation Center who hosted the group, the travel agency with whom reservations were made, Mr. Ray Meyers and the Lions Club for providing transportation, and Mrs. Snow for coordinating the trip.



Geneva Stevens, Ann and Art Swearingen, and Lydia Alexandria enter the train station a tired but happy group.

Annual Christmas Party Held

Snow and ice did not bar the many blind from attending the Lions Club Christmas Party last December 7 at Gladieux One.

The party, which was the Lions Club's 51st annual event for the blind, featured Judge Reno R. Riley, Jr. of the Court of Common Pleas as guest speaker.

Writer Don Wolfe had this to say about the party in his "I've Heard" column in the December 27th issue of *The Blade*:

"When Judge Reno Riley, Jack Mitchell, and Don Edwards put on a Christmas program for the Toledo Society for the Blind, each confessed nervousness. They wondered if some of their stories about cows, football, horses, gold balls, etc., would be understood by the audience, most of whom had never seen such objects. Their program turned out to be a howling success. 'I know why you had such a great audience,' Otto Adler explained. 'Blind persons really listen.'"

The party, which was chaired by Ed Binkleman, Jr., was rounded out by special musical selections sung by the Perrysburg High School Choral Group. Transportation also was provided by the Lions Club.

Ed Nowak: A Love For His Profession

Ed Nowak has been making and fitting glasses for nearly 39 years. And he still likes his work. Though he has been in the optical business since 1938, Ed didn't go into his own business as a retail optician until 1950. And it was that same year he started making glasses for the Society—27 years ago.

At the current price of cost plus \$10 for each pair of glasses made for the Society, a more lucrative trade, of course, prevails among the general public. Why, then, has he continued to offer his optical services to the near blind for the past 27 years?

"People who are sighted have given me my living, for which I am thankful," Ed stated recently. "Each had an eye-sight deficiency which I could help correct. But there's something very special about helping the nearly blind."

Ed cited a recent example of an 18-month-old girl who was so near-sighted she had only a three or four inch focal vision. "When I put on her glasses, she looked at her mother and saw her for the first time in her life. The little girl was so amazed and happy that the mother started to cry, and I cried too."

Ed's firm, Nowak-Morey Opticians, is one of three that makes and fits glasses for the Society's eye clinic at St. Vincent Hospital. The other two are

Rudey Opticians and Optical Arts. Each takes a turn alternating months, along with an ophthalmologist, overseeing the eye clinic.

To keep up to date in his profession, Ed attends appropriate seminars at Ohio State University and is a member of the Society of Dispensing Opticians of Ohio, an organization which helps further education in the field of opticianery. He also has been a member of the Lions Club for 15 years and is affiliated with the Opticians Association of America, the International Academy of Opticianery, and holds a master's degree with the American Board of Opticianery.

Currently, Ed is thinking about retirement and looks forward to having his son, Ed, Jr., carry on the business. His other son, Christopher, is also in the field of opticianery and specializes in contact lenses.

How does Ed feel after completing nearly 39 years in the same field? "One time I quit, but after three weeks I couldn't stand it any longer and came back," he answered. "To be in this business, you must love people, and I do."

And after watching Ed Nowak handle a customer, that fact becomes obvious.



With the aid of a vertometer, Ed checks to see that lenses are ground to proper specifications.

How To Succeed At Being Blind

In the December, 1976 issue of the *New Outlook for the Blind*, an article appeared entitled "How to Succeed at Being Blind." It is an exceptionally well written and informative piece, authored by Dr. Hanan C. Selvin, a professor of sociology at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Because the article is too lengthy to present in its entirety, the Newsletter would like to excerpt portions of it over the next several issues. The author conveys a special insight into blindness only a blind person could relate to a sighted person. The first portion is introductory and focuses on entering the blindness system.

Given the choice, everyone, including the blind, would like to have normal sight, just as everyone would like to be handsome and rich. But just as some people are able to live normal, satisfying, productive, and even happy lives without being beautiful or rich, so most blind people can learn to lead good lives. It takes a bit more learning and a lot more perseverance.

I do not know all the answers to this problem, any more than I know all the answers to other important problems in life, but, having taught people how to do research for many years, I myself have learned something about the process. That is, I have treated my blindness as a problem for research and have reaped certain benefits from this. In this article I want to share some of this knowledge with those who are becoming blind, those who have recently become blind, and with the other significant persons in their lives who may benefit from this knowledge. If you learn something useful from this article, you can repay me by doing two things: (1) passing on a copy to anyone

"The Cross-Eyed Child," Topic At Next Lecture

The second annual Toledo Society for the Blind lecture will be held at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, April 26, at the Toledo Hospital Doctor's Auditorium. New parking facilities will provide ample parking space.

Guest speaker will be Dr. Conrad Giles, an ophthalmologist from Southfield, Michigan, whose topic will be, "The Cross-Eyed Child." Mark your calendar now so that you might learn more about this common eye problem.

Members of the coordinating committee for this lecture are: Drs. Robert Huss, Robert Kiess, Messrs. Lyle Kirk, Sam Magee, and Michael Wood.

else who may benefit from it (you will be surprised how many of them you encounter in the months and years ahead); and (2) sending me any ideas of your own that may go into future versions.

As Robert A. Scott has put it in his *The Making of Blind Men*, blindness is more a learned social role than a physical condition. Of course, only those who actually have the physical condition need to learn that role, but the ways in which they behave and others behave toward them depend more on both groups' ideas of blindness as a supreme catastrophe—the worst thing that can happen to anyone—then the only rational sequel is suicide. If, however, one defines blindness as a nuisance that can be circumvented or overcome with appropriate gadgetry, training, and intelligence, then being blind is not the worst of all possible fates. In short, life as a blind person is what you make of it.

Entering Blindness System

The blindness system is all of those people, agencies, facilities, laws, and other aspects of culture and society that have to do with sight and blindness. Anyone reading this article has already made some contact with that system, but a more formal and prolonged contact is necessary to reap its full benefits.

Relatively slight defects in sight may deprive one of certain rights, such as a license to drive a car or pilot a plane, but the condition of being legally blind is rather different. The precise definition is something for your ophthalmologist (an M.D. especially trained to deal with problems of vision) or optometrist (a paramedical practitioner licensed to prescribe and sell glasses),

cont. on page 4



The Sign Post

On Tuesday, March 1, Dennis Klukan, the Society's Sheltered Workshop Coordinator and master's candidate in Public Health, and Dr. Robert Wiley, staff ophthalmologist at St. Charles Hospital, presented a program on blindness and aging to 60 members of the Toledo Chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons. Topics covered included a statistical and social service perspective on geriatric visual conditions and a medical information summary. A question and answer period followed.

* * *

Some definitions to remember:

Optician: fills prescriptions for wholesale or retail sale.

Optometrist: a Doctor of Optometry who refracts eyes to test vision, prescribes lenses for correction, but does not prescribe medicine.

Ophthalmologist: a Doctor of Medicine who treats diseases of the eye, prescribing medicine or using surgery when indicated. (Oculist is an outdated synonym for ophthalmologist.)

* * *

The Traffic Engineering Department of Toledo has erected new caution signs at major intersections. These are large triangular signs with a white cane and a rectangular sign below cautioning motorists to "Yield to the Blind." The signs are approximately 300 feet from the intersection. The installation of the signs coincided with the observance of National White Cane Day.

* * *

Kathy Batdorf, formerly employed in the industrial workshop at the Society, is now receptionist for the nutrition program held five days a week at the Sylvania-Burnham School Building in Sylvania.

* * *

Catalogs Available

Two 1976-77 catalogs are now available from the American Foundation for the Blind. One is the Catalog of Publications, and the other is Aids & Appliances for the Blind & Visually Impaired. Both may be ordered from the American Foundation for the Blind, Inc., 15 West 16th Street, New York, New York 10011. Both list a multitude of items and publications available for the visually handicapped.



Ed Nowak watches his son, Ed, Jr., fit glasses on a customer.